

to debate on the bill itself. Senator Bromm, did you wish to speak now?

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Madam President. I would urge the body to advance the bill. If there are further discussions that need to be had on amendments, since it's my priority bill, I would be more than happy to participate in any of that discussion. I think we've heard a lot about the reasons why we need the bill and why we should go ahead with it and I don't want to be redundant in that respect. One thing that hasn't been mentioned that I think is a fairly important point and one of the reasons that I was willing to make this a priority bill, there are states, as I understand it, that are receiving grant funds from the EPA to work on their state management plan. We are going to be needing to do that. We need to do that as soon as possible, within the next year or two. And if we adopt the act, it is my understanding that it would put us in a much better position to request any grant funds as such grant funds are available. And I think that's...that's terribly important. I think the other thing, the other thing is that I have concerns, as Senator Beutler asked, about whether or not the funding will always be there. However, the problem is always going to be there. And if we, as a body, do not think that we, as a state, should address this problem, regardless of where the funding comes from or whether sources are there indefinitely or not, then I think...then I think we're missing the boat. I think this would have happened a long time ago, the state would have had the act a long time ago except for specific vested interests who have had objections and problems with the particular legislation. I think it's most definitely the responsible thing to do and the right thing to do and it's very much overdue. I urge the body to advance the bill.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator. I will now recognize Senator Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Madam President, members, as you know, traditionally the people that have been opposed to the bill have been the chemical industry being regulated and they have never been comfortable using state money to administer a plan that the federal government has been willing to fund. And over the number of years that we have not taken part in it, as a state, we have saved the state literally millions and millions of dollars. But we do realize with the changing needs and the changing requirements that have come from the EPA that it's